

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY PRIORITY

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TAGS:MARR, MLFOR, PGOV, GV UR CH

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT ON SOVIET USE OF GUINEAN
AIR FIELD FACILITIES

REF: CONAKRY 930

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. PRESIDENT FORD SPOKE TO 73RD
ANNUAL NAVY LEAGUE CONVENTION IN NEW ORLEANS, APRIL 23,
CONCERNING CURRENT SITUATION US NAVY. WITHIN BODY OF
SPEECH HE SAID FOLLOWING:

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2. QUOTE. AT THE OUTSET OF WORLD WAR II, AMERICA HAD A

3,000 MILE OCEAN BARRIER ON THE EAST COAST AND A 10,000 MILE OCEAN BARRIER ON THE WEST COAST. THE MIGHTY BRITISH FLEET ACTED AS A FRIENDLY BUFFER. AND THE UNITED STATES HAD A TWO-YEAR LEAD TIME TO GEAR UP OUR GREAT MILITARY PRODUCTION CAPABILITIES BETWEEN THE OUTBREAK OF WAR IN EUROPE AND OUR OWN ENTRY AT PEARL HARBOR.

3. TODAY WE FACE A VERY DIFFERENT SITUATION. FOR EXAMPLE, SOVIET NAVAL UNITS NOW FREELY ROAM THE WORLD SEAS, CIRCUMNAVIGATING THE STATE OF HAWAII IN THE PACIFIC, AND OPERATING IN THE GULF OF MEXICO.

4. LET ME GIVE YOU A VERY GRAPHIC EXAMPLE, IF I MIGHT, SOMETHING THAT HAS HAPPENED WITHIN THE PAST FEW DAYS. ELEMENTS FROM ALL FOUR FLEETS OF THE SOVIET NAVY HAVE JUST COMPLETED GLOBAL MANEUVERS. MORE THAN 200 SOVIET SHIPS DEPLOYED IN ALL OF THE OCEANS OF THE WORLD PARTICIPATED IN THIS EXERCISE. MORE THAN 50 SOVIET SHIPS WERE DEPLOYED IN THE ATLANTIC, EXTENDING THEIR MANEUVERS TO THE NORWEGIAN SEA AND SOUTHWEST OF THE BRITISH ISLES.

5. SOVIET RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT, OPERATING FROM CUBA AND GUINEA, CONDUCTED OCEAN SURVEILLANCE OVER WIDE AREAS OF THE ATLANTIC. THE SOVIET NAVY WAS ALSO ACTIVE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE PACIFIC AND THE INDIAN OCEAN.

6. THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, THE SOVIET UNION UNDERSTANDS THE IMPORTANCE OF SEAPOWER. THE RUSSIANS BUILT UP THEIR NAVY WHILE WE PERMITTED OURS TO SHRINK AND THEY KNOW HOW TO SHOW THEIR FLAG. UNQUOTE.

7. SPEECH WAS NOT CARRIED BY USIS WIRELESS FILE.
END UNCLASSTFIED.

8. COMMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. THERE HAS BEEN NO GUINEAN REACTION OF WHICH WE ARE AWARE IN US TO PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT. AS EMBASSY KNOWS, SOVIET USE OF GUINEAN MILITARY FACILITIES HAS BEEN MENTIONED IN N.Y. TIMES, WASHINGTON POST, AND OTHER NEWSPAPERS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS EXTENDING BACK OVER PAST SEVERAL YEARS. PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT.
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DENT'S SPEECH IS FIRST PUBLIC STATEMENT AT HIGHEST LEVEL
TAKING NOTE OF SOVIET USE OF GUINEAN AIR FACILITIES. KISSINGER

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